

1. Project Name:

Buffalo-Skedaddle Landscape Management and Restoration Initiative:

Nort Springs (UTM 726402E 4541816N) and Cold Springs Mountain (UTM 728152E 4546375N)
Sage-grouse Habitat Enhancement Project (UTM 10 NAD83)

2. Project Summary:

The Nort Springs and Cold Springs Mountain Sage-grouse habitat Enhancement Project proposed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), consists of treatment of 1,150 acres of western juniper and 300 acres of Scotch thistle to directly improve nesting and summer brood-rearing habitat conditions for sage-grouse. The project area is in northern Lassen County approximately 8 miles east of Madeline, CA in the area of Cold Springs Mountain and Dodge Spring. These lands are public lands managed by BLM. Land uses include cattle grazing, dispersed recreation activities, and adjacent agriculture. Critical resources include increasingly impacted sagebrush steppe vegetation, wildlife habitat, water sources, meadows, riparian, and archaeology.

The project is the first proposed project within one of ten identified project areas comprising a landscape-scale *Initiative* for restoring sagebrush steppe habitat which supports sage-grouse and many other sagebrush-dependent species within the Buffalo-Skedaddle (sage-grouse) Population Management Unit (PMU). This *Initiative* implements a stakeholder-developed *Conservation Strategy* for this PMU which, in turn, is part of a national Department of Interior priority for sage-grouse/sagebrush restoration and links to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, and the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA). This MOU identifies, among numerous objectives, the State's leadership role in convening working groups to develop state and local conservation plans, and the land management agencies' roles in providing habitat protection, and conservation and restoration. The Buffalo-Skedaddle Conservation Strategy is a grass-roots product of this nationally-driven process.

Integral to the project, and a major goal of the overall *Initiative*, is a locally-driven implementation component. The project utilizes local organizations such as Resource Conservation Districts (RCD), Resource Conservation and Development Districts (RC&D), and other non-profit organizations for project administration, oversight, and implementation. Local involvement is intended to help the community develop infrastructure to support ecosystem restoration and to keep funding directed back into the county to support jobs and other benefits.

The project falls under the umbrella of the multi-agency, multi-governmental, and multi-jurisdictional Sage Steppe Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (draft August 2007). This strategy, covering 6.5 million acres in northeastern California, focuses on the invasive juniper issue and its impact on the ecosystem. The strategy identifies appropriate restoration methodologies by ecological condition, and provides guidelines for design and implementation of effective restoration treatments. These guidelines provide a tool for identifying economically viable areas where restoration can yield biomass for energy production. This tool is integrated into the Buffalo-Skedaddle *Initiative* ensuring maximum utilization and economic benefit from individual projects.

3. Authorization:

Actions in this grant application are on public lands managed by Bureau of Land Management, Alturas Field Office. The BLM authorized representative Alturas Field Manager, Tim Burke.